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DR. ALFRED BILMANIS

The Church in Latvia

Skyline of Riga, the Capital of Latvia

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The Church in Latvia

Henricus de Lettis, the first Latvian ordained priest, writes his Chronicles in 1225.

Published by
DRAUGA VĒSTS
New York
1945

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Printed in U. S. A.

LATVIA

ESTONIA

U.S.S.R.

LITHUANIA

POLAND

GULF OF RIGA

MAZSALACE
RUJIENA
AINAŽI
SALACGRIVA
VALKA
STREMCI
VALMIERA
LIMBAŽI
APE
ALUKSNE
CĒSIS
SMILTENE
LEJASCIEMS
VENTSPILS
VALDEMĀRPILS
PILTENE
TALSI
GAUJA R.
SIGULDA
GULBENE
BĀLVI
JAUNLATGALE
VENTA R.
SABILE
KANDAVA
KULDIGA
TUKUMS
KEMERI
RIGAS JURMALA
SLOKA
RIGA
MADONA
KĀRSAVA
AIZPUTE
BALDONE
ĶEGUMS
ĢRĒ
LIEPAJA
GROBIŅA
PRIEKULE
SALDUS
DOBELE
AUCE
JELGAVA
LIELUPE R.
DAUGAVA R.
PLAVINAS
VARAKLĀNI
LUDZA
KRUSTPILS
JĒKABPILS
VILĀNI
REZEKNE
RITUPE
BAUSKA
LIMBAŽI
VECSTE
PREILI
SUBATA
ILLUKSTE
DAUGAVPILS
KRĀSLAVA
INDRA
GRĪVA

NORWAY
FINLAND
SWEDEN
ESTONIA
LATVIA
U.S.S.R
LITHUANIA
DENMARK
ENGLAND
GERMANY
HOLLAND
BELGIUM
FRANCE
GERMANY
POLAND

THE CHURCH IN LATVIA

Baltic Peoples Constitute Dividing Line Between Occidental and Eurasian Cultures

The Baltic peoples, the Finns, Estonians, Latvians, Lithuanians and Poles, are the most northeastern outpost of the Western, Occidental world. This civilization and culture arose from Greek classicism and Roman law humanized by Christianity, produced the splendid Renaissance of arts and sciences, and, in modern times, developed, by way of the liberal philosophy of the XVIII and XIX centuries, into the broadly humane, economically cooperative, politically democratic, socially and scientifically progressive, and religiously free way of life characteristic of European and American democracies.

Western civilization ends with the Baltic States and Poland. Beyond their eastern borders begins Eurasian civilization, with taproots in Central Asia and ancient Byzantium, covered but lightly with a thin veneer of European civilization.

The ethical codes of the two cultures and civilizations, expressed in terms of religion, are sharply distinct.

The predominant religions of Western Europe, to which the Baltic peoples belong, are Roman Catholicism and Protestantism or Lutheranism.

It should, however, be borne in mind that, actually, the differences between Roman Catholicism and Protestantism are the differences, so to speak, between sisters of the same family.

In the Baltic States, where religion is considered a spiritual necessity and freedom of religion is a basic feature, Roman Catholicism and Protestantism, inspired with mutual tolerance, serve to strengthen ethics and the patriotic spirit of the people.

Quite different is the status of religion east of the Baltic States, where it is only tolerated, and considered by the leading communistic dogma as an "opium" for the masses. Besides, the Greek-Orthodox religion was not able to achieve a real base in the hearts and souls of the Baltic people.

It is interesting to note that in the Baltic States the Greek-Orthodox religion is usually known as the "Russian faith," because it was the compulsory state religion of Czarist Russia and an instrument of czarist imperialistic policy. In spite of the latter fact and of the powerful support the

Greek-Orthodox religion enjoyed from official quarters in the old Russian Empire, it made but insignificant headway in the Baltic States. Comparative statistics show the following distribution of religions in the Baltic states:

Country	Year	Roman Catholic	Protes-tant	Old-be-lievers	Greek-Or-thodox	Other Christian	Hebrew
Finland ..	1930....	0.10%	98.00%		1.80%		0.1 %
Estonia ..	1934....	0.20%	78.20%		19.00%	1.5%	0.4 %
Latvia ...	1935....	24.45%	56.13%	5.50%	8.94%	0.19%	4.79%
Lithuania	1928....	85.70%	3.80%		2.34%	0.5 %	7.6 %
Poland ...	1931....	75.2 %	2.60%		11.80%	0.5 %	9.8 %

The Baltic peoples instinctively and devotedly held to their own religion inherited from their fathers, and Greek-Orthodox proselytizing had little success, despite the tempting promises of different material benefits and privileges.

Characteristics of Latvians

The Latvian people, as is testified in their folklore (the Dainas or folk-songs, tales, riddles), are naturally religious and have always believed in eternal life. Their ancient religion was pantheistic naturalism, and they had no idols. The ancient Indo-European sun myth is reflected in the Latvian Dainas. The Latvians also, like the ancient Indo-Europeans, have a dualism in their religion. The supreme ruler was "Dievs" — God, sometimes called also "Perkons" (the thunderer) or "Vecais" (the "old man"). Next in line was a feminine deity known as "Laima," the protectress of new-born children, etc. Nature was animated: forests, lakes, rivers, winds, fields, etc., and they had their genii or "mothers." The souls of the dead, the "veli," lived near their old homes, sometimes in oak trees. There were also bad evil genii, such as "jodi" (devils), "velns" (Satan), "ragana" (witch), etc.

The Latvian word for God has the same derivative root as Sanscrit "Div" and the equivalent term in other ancient languages: in Greek, "Zeus" (gen. Deos); in Latin, "Deus"; in old Prussian "Devos"; in Lithuanian, "Devas"; in old Irish, "Dea"; in Gallic, "Devo."

It is often to be observed that agricultural peoples, living close to and dependent on the forces of nature, have religions based on adoration of these forces. This was the case with the Latvians, as well as with their neighbors, the Lithuanians, Estonians and Finns.

Latvian philosophy of life is based on a deep feeling of right and of eternal justice. This, together with the perception of eternal life pervading

nature, is a sound basis for religion and ethics. A strong family, father and mother having equal rights, and children obedient to their parents is known since the earliest times in Latvia. The old Latvians also had their common law and in general were a civilized nation only subject to tribal particularism. The separate tribes of Kuronians, Semigallians, Selonians, Latgallians and Talavians had, however, their own rulers and elders. Relations with Scandinavian countries existed since the VIII century and possibly earlier.

Catholic Faith Prevails Over Greek-Orthodox in the XIII Century in Latvia

The Latvians of Kurland, the southern province of Latvia, had their first contact with Christianity through the Scandinavians. According to Bishop Adam of Bremen, as early as the XI century (in 1048) a Christian church was built by the Danish King, Sven Estridson, in the vicinity of a locality known as Domesnaes (the site of the Dome) in Northern Kurland.* Scandinavian missionaries Hiltuin, Johannes (XI century) and Fulco (XII century) preached among the Baltic peoples.

On the other hand the Russian chronicler, the monk Nestor, promoted the legend that Apostle Andreas, brother of Apostle Peter, came to Novgorod and Baltic shores to baptize the people living there, and that he proceeded even to Scandinavia. However, it is known that the Russians of the principality of Kiev were baptized only at the end of the X century, and, consequently, the Slavic tribes of northeastern Russia could have been converted only in the XI century.

The Greek-Orthodox clergy in the Slavonic principalities neighboring Latvia nonetheless made the legend of Apostle Andreas' mission its own and became most active in baptizing the neighboring Latvians and Livs, a tribe of Finnish fishermen, who during the VII-VIII centuries had migrated to Latvia looking for better fishing grounds and who settled on the estuaries of the Daugava (Duna) and the Gauja rivers, both flowing into the Gulf of Riga. The Livs, dwelling south of the Daugava cataracts, at Ykeskŭla became an object of "baptization" of the Greek-Orthodox priests from Polotzk, who could easily reach the Livs by using the Daugava river as communication. Also the Latvians of the principality of Tolova, neighboring with Pskov, were baptized by Greek-Orthodox priests, as well as the Latvians of the Latgallian Kingdom, bordering on the principality of Polotzk. According to the testimony of the chronicler Henricus de Lettis, the Livs, however, preferred Roman Catholicism and in the Eighties of the XII century were baptized by the German missionary, the Augustinian Friar Meinhard, who in 1186 became their Bishop.

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* K. Vanags. *Zemgale un Kurzeme*. Riga, 1939, p. 542.

As reported by Henricus de Lettis, the Latgallian King Vissevald (in the beginning of the XIII century) was of the Greek-Orthodox faith.* In his capital, Guerceke (on the right bank of the middle Daugava), there were even two churches. After King Vissevald in 1209 became a vassal of Prince-Bishop Albert of Riga, he adopted the Roman Catholic faith. Also the Latvian King, Talivald of Tolova, according to Henricus de Lettis, in 1214 became a vassal of Bishop Albert and simultaneously changed his Greek-Orthodox faith to Roman Catholic. So did his sons. Eventually the Roman Catholic missionaries succeeded over the Greek-Orthodox priests. Had it not been for the oppressive German knights of the Order of Brethren of Christ's Militia (founded in Latvia in 1202 for the purposes of converting the Livs and the Latvians by fire and sword, and whom the Semigallians, allied with the Samogithians, exterminated in 1236) and for their not less cruel and greedy successors, the German knights of the Livonian Order (a subdivision of the Teutonic Knights, established in 1237 in Latvia) the Latvians might have peacefully accepted Roman Catholicism, which was nearer to their own nature than the Greek-Orthodox faith. The Kuronians, Semigallians and Selonians dwelling south of the river Daugava and having in their rear the Baltic Sea and the Lithuanian Samogithians struggled against the German knights all through the XIII century. The Semigallian army, after the occupation of Kuronia and Selonia, continued to fight alone, and in 1290 preferred to retreat to neighboring Lithuania rather than to surrender and become slaves of the German Order.

Holy See Friendly to Latvians

The Roman Catholic Church was traditionally friendly to Latvians and always tried to be helpful in averting undue persecution by German knights. Politically, the Pope tried to exempt the converted Latvian land from the rule of the German Emperor.

So, for instance, in 1207 the Bishopric of Livonia was recognized by Emperor Philip as a Principality of the Holy Roman Empire, but Pope Innocent III in 1215 proclaimed it the Terra Mariana, subject directly to the Holy See. The later-established Bishoprics of Selonia, Semigallia and Kuronia were also subject directly to the Pope but not to the German Archbishopric of Bremen. However, the Germanized Order in Livonia systematically tried to obtain the right to nominate the Bishops and Archbishop of Livonia, and after it had achieved that right, it usually chose Bishops of the German race and impressed on them to join the Order.

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* Henricus de Lettis. *Origines Livoniae* 1180-1227. Reprinted in the symposium *Scriptores Rerum Livonicarum*, Vol. I, Riga, 1847.

Thus the black habit of the Chapter of St. Mary in Riga was changed to the white one of the Livonian Order.

Popes Innocent III, Honorius III, Gregory IX, Innocent IV, Clement X and others tried to protect the Latvians from the greed of the German invaders masquerading as crusaders. In the XIII century two Papal Delegates were sent to Latvian lands for this purpose: Cardinal William of Sabina and Bishop Baldwin of Alna, and in the XIV century, Bishop Moliano. In 1254 the Bishopric Terra Mariana was elevated to the rank of Archbishopric, Albert Suerbeer, the former Primate of Ireland, being appointed its first Archbishop, directly subordinate to the Holy See.

The Prince-Archbishop of Riga was also appointed Metropolitan of Prussia or the Terra Petri, Kurland, Semigallia, Selonia, Livonia and Estonia.

From then on the Archbishops did their best, although with no visible results, to thwart the greed of the Livonian knights and to educate the newly converted Latvians. As early as in the year 1206 a religious play was produced in Riga, showing the most prominent events described in the Bible.* The play was a mystery-play in Latin, but translators explained to the audience the meaning of the spoken words. Religious arts and crafts were fostered; church singing, church sculpture, particularly wood-cutting, and painting were developed. The copying of manuscripts created a basis for a spiritual and intellectual culture. Young Latvians were accepted in Holy Orders and became priests. One of these, the already mentioned Henricus de Lettis, wrote the Chronicles of Livonia (1180-1227), an early copy of which was discovered in the private library of the famous Polish statesman of the XVI century, Jan Zamoyski.

The administrators of the Archbishopric, the Ministerials or Officials of the Dome-Chapter of Riga and other high Church dignitaries treated the people in a kindly manner and were trusted by them. Parish schools were opened: the Dom-school of Riga in 1211, the school of the St. George's Church in 1266 and the school of St. Peter in 1353. Latvian children were admitted. There is information that in the provincial parishes primary education was also fostered. At the end of the XV century seventy-eight parishes were organized in Livonia.

Lutheranism: German National Political Movement

The XV and XVI centuries marked great political changes throughout Europe. The Holy See gradually lost its secular power. This was of advantage and profit to the Germans in Livonia, and they proceeded to capitalize upon the situation. The Germanized Livonian Order in 1492 ob-

* Henricus de Lettis. Op. cit.

tained full control over the Bishopric Terra Mariana and soon the profane name Livonia prevailed over the sacred name of the country. In 1522 Martin Luther's emissaries appeared in Riga and Lutheranism was soon firmly established there. The properties of the Roman Catholic church were taken over by the Lutheran administration of Riga.

In 1526 the Archbishop of Riga and the other Livonian Bishops voluntarily recognized the supreme power of Walter von Plettenberg, the Grand Master of the Livonian Order. After the disbandment of the Teutonic Knights in 1525 in Prussia, the Livonian Order became the sole hope of the Hanseatic Germans in the Baltic lands. In 1530 Grand Master W. von Plettenberg, the conqueror of the Muscovites at Smolina in 1502, became Prince of the Holy Roman Empire, ranking 44th.

In accordance with the prevailing policy in Germany itself, the Germanized Livonian Order, almost a secular power, slowly moved away from the Holy See and compromised more and more with the Protestant movement. In 1555 the representative of H. von Galen, the Grand Master of the Livonian Order, signed the "Peace of Augsburg," stipulating tolerance of Protestantism. However, the Protestant movement in Livonia was concentrated only in the cities Riga, Reval or Tallinn, Dorpat, Fellin and others. The country population still clung to its old Roman Catholic creed. It was not so with the clergy, who being mostly of the German race, began to neglect their work and gradually deserted the parishes. Many churches were closed. Of the more than thirty parishes in Kurland at the end of the XV century only nine parishes continued to exist by the middle of the XVI century. No wonder that the country population gradually returned to their old ancestral creed.

On the other hand, the political situation became most adverse for the continuation of the independent Livonian Order State, both on the international and the home front. The German squires had not the necessary patriotism to make sacrifices in order to meet the foreign danger of an imminent Moscow invasion. They looked for somebody who would fight for them. The knights of the order, the new supreme ruler in Livonia, became so arrogant that they even imprisoned the Archbishop, Markgrave William of Brandenburg, when he without their previous consent nominated as his coadjutor Bishop-Prince Christopher of Meklenburg. Only the intervention of the Polish King saved the Archbishop from the irate German squires this time.

In 1561 the Grand Master of the Livonian Order, Gothard Kettler, submitted to the suzerainty of the King of Poland, and in March, 1562 disbanded the Order. He secularized himself and became a Lutheran, as did the knights and vassals. Livonia was partitioned between Poland, Denmark and Sweden. Kurland and Semigallia, including the Province of

Selonia, all south of the river Daugava, became a Duchy with the former Grand Master, Prince Gothard Kettler, as hereditary Duke, but under suzerainty of the King of Poland. Incidentally, he took steps to eliminate Bishop-Prince Christopher of Meklenburg, a possible competitor, and held him prisoner until his death. This time the King of Poland overlooked the desecration of the Roman Catholic Church. Livonia proper (the former Latvian kingdom of Tolova) and Latgallia (the Latvian kingdom of Lettia) became a Polish-Lithuanian dependency, and was named the Ducatus Ultradunensis or the Duchy on the north-bank of the river Duna or Daugava. The Bishopric of Piltene in northern Kurland in 1559 was sold by its last Bishop Johann von Muenchhousen (of German race) to the Danish King, who bestowed it upon his brother, Duke Magnus, later the shadow-king of Livonia from 1570 - 1578. Estonia, the northernmost province of the Terra Mariana, became a Swedish Duchy.

The new master of Livonia, the King of Poland, Sigismund II, guided by the wish to foster the newly created political relationship with Livonia, was tolerant. He sent as his envoy to arrange the preliminaries of Livonia's submission a Calvinist, the Prince Radziwill, who also officially disbanded the Livonian Order in March 1562, in Riga.

Simultaneously with the introduction of the new political order the Protestant religion was also fostered in Livonia, giving a good pretext to the knights and vassals of the Order to secularize themselves, and, more important, to appropriate the fiefs they held on behalf of the Order and the Archbishopric. This was overlooked by the Polish King for the time being.

According to the rule, *cujus regio ejus religio* (whose domination, his religion) Protestantism was forced on the Latvians. Thus, for instance, Duke Gothard of Kurland ordered the building of seventy churches in his Duchy, to which, however, were appointed German pastors who did not even know the Latvian language and began to learn it only after their appointments. The Duke, being according to the Protestant rule the head of the Protestant Church, issued a degree about the church organization in Kurland, which only perpetuated the domination of the Germans in church affairs. The local landlord was considered to have the right to choose the pastors for the parish, and the Consistorium only approved the pastor chosen by the landlord. This system known as the patronage or "patronate" existed until the beginning of the XX century.

The new suzerains of the partitioned Latvian lands let things drift along for the time being. Besides, they had promised to respect all the privileges of the squires. For them it was most important to secure political domination. Also, the Duke of Kurland did not like to antagonize his peers, the other big German landowners of Kurland.

In the same way the Polish crown was very cautious in Livonia proper and let the squires have their own way. It was important to secure their support against Muscovy and to withhold them from Swedish orientation. Last but not least, the Swedish rule in newly acquired Estonia also followed the same method to gain on its side the seigneurs. The oligarchic Diets of the landed nobles in Estonia, Livonia and Kurland continued to be the actual rulers. When the Diet first was founded in Livonia, in 1422, the cities and the Archbishop were represented in it, although the majority were vassals of the Order and of the Archbishop. After the secularization of the Order in 1562 the knights joined the estate of the vassals and the nobles became preponderant. The cities after the disbandment of the Order continued to send their representatives to the Diet, and in place of the representatives of the Archbishop the representatives of the Protestant Consistorium General or highest Lutheran Church administration now appeared. They were all Germans except the representatives of the respective new sovereigns: in Estonia, the Swedish Governor-General and in Livonia, the Polish Voyevode or Governor.

Only after the war with Muscovy was won by the Poles did the latter begin to look deeper into matters. Thus in Livonia a Roman Catholic counter-reformation began in 1582, but could not succeed owing to Swedish intervention. The population of Latgallia or the "Polish Inflantes" due to the direct domination of Poland preserved its Roman Catholic religion.

Catholic Counter-Reformation in Livonia

As soon as King Stephen Bathory, the victor in the war against Muscovy, occupied Riga in 1582, he proclaimed the *Constitutiones Livoniae,* actually a decree restoring the Roman Catholic Archbishopric. The latter was established once more, and the Cathedral of St. Jacob was returned to the Archbishop. Religious orders were reestablished, and a college of Jesuits was opened in Riga. The Roman Catholic chapel of the Castle of Riga, the church of the Mater Dolorosa, destroyed by the enraged German Lutherans, was rebuilt through the bounty of King Philip II of Spain. In 1585 the catechism of St. Peter Canisius was translated into Latvian through the endeavours of the Jesuits of the College of Wilno. M. Luther's "Little Catechism" was translated in 1586.

A Roman Catholic Bishopric was established in Wenden or Cesis, already an old political center of the Latvians in the XIII century, wherefrom hails the Latvian crimson-white-crimson flag.

Now the Latvians of Livonia proper faced a return to Roman Catholicism. King Stephen Bathory, a staunch Hungarian Catholic, even preferred to speak Latin, and his closest adviser was the famous Jesuit An-

tonius Possevinus, who almost succeeded in reuniting the Swedish Protestant Church with the Church of Rome.* This was frustrated by the death of Queen Catherine, the wife of King Johann III. Sister of King Sigismund II of Poland, she was the head of the Swedish pro-Catholic movement, which with her death lost its great support.

King Bathory died in 1587 and his nephew, Sigismund Vasa, the Prince Royal of Sweden, was elected as his successor. Sigismund III was the son of Catherine, Queen of Sweden, who was the sister of the dowager Queen Anna of Poland, wife of King Stephen Bathory.

A Polish-Swedish Empire was in the making, but was not realized, because King Sigismund III, advised by his private counsellor, the Cardinal Malaspina, preferred to be a militant Catholic. Upon his accession to the Swedish throne he tried to reestablish Catholicism in Sweden, but in 1598 the Swedes forced him to leave Swedish soil. Eventually his Protestant uncle, Charles Vasa, became King of Sweden, and a bitter war began between Poland and Sweden.

The Swedes occupied Livonia proper around 1610, and Gustavus Adolphus took Riga in 1621. Only Latgallia was kept by Poland. It is interesting to note that the German squires, since the period of Polish preponderance in the Fifteen-Eighties, and the investigation of their titles to the land they held in possession begun by the Polish crown, gladly turned to the Swedish side, hoping for better treatment. Now, by order of Sweden, Livonia had again to change its faith from Roman Catholic to Lutheran. From 1561, in about sixty years, three changes of religion took place! Only Latgallia, as already mentioned, continued to be Roman Catholic throughout this period. Kurland, being an almost independent Duchy, continued to be Lutheran, although a rather dynamic Catholic counter-reformation was also started there. However, the Swedish successes stopped the expansion.

Origins of Latvian Religious and Didactic Literature

All the lands inhabited by Latvians, with the exception of Latgale, became Lutheran in the XVII century. Vidzeme or Livonia was under Swedish Lutheran rule, while Kurland and Semigallia were under the rule of the Dukes of the family of Gothard Kettler, who were also strongly Lutheran and related to German Lutheran princely families: the Dukes of Brandenburg, Meklenburg and others.

According to the religious administration introduced by Duke Gothard, the Latvian language became compulsory in church services in predominantly Latvian parishes.

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* See: Nils Ahnlund, *Gustav Adolf the Great,* Princeton Univ. Press, New York 1940, p. 9. "Johan III . . . was heading straight for Rome," p. 10. "Katarina's death (1583) had a tempering effect on Johan's leaning to Catholicism."

The Superintendents-General of the Duchy's Lutheran Church endeavoured to induce the German pastors to learn the language of the people and in their own interests to prepare Latvian grammars, dictionaries, handbooks, hymnals and symposiums of sermons.

In view of the fact that Vidzeme or Livonia was under a benevolent Swedish rule, which lasted until 1721, and that the Swedish Governor-General also encouraged the German pastors to perfect their knowledge of the Latvian language, similar works appeared in that province.

This serves to explain the great activity of the German pastors on behalf of Latvian literature during the XVII century. The XVIII and the XIX centuries were progressively poorer in this respect.

The most important works of the XVII century are the handbooks, dictionaries and grammars published by Rehehusen, Mancelius, K. Fuerecker and J. Adolphi, and the Bible translated by E. Glueck in 1689. The latter was actually the collective work of several German pastors, under the auspices of J. Fischer, the Superintendent-General of the Lutheran Church, and was financed by the Swedish government. The Swedish administration fostered parish and Sunday schools, and opened a college in Riga to which Latvians had access. During this period several pastors of Latvian race were ordained, after having studied at the Theological Faculty of the University of Dorpat (Tartu), which was also opened by the Swedes. It ought to be stressed that the Swedish crown was most benevolent to Latvian spiritual needs and in the protection of the rights of Latvians. Not only were parish organizations established, but also courts with free access for Latvian peasants, who even remonstrated personally in Stockholm several times. Eventually the Swedish King Charles XI in 1681 abolished serfdom, ordered the investigation of the land titles of the German squires, and even suspended the oligarchic Livonian Diet in 1694. Thus the German squires looked for protection elsewhere and found it by the Russian Czar Peter. Again in their personal interests they betrayed state interests and took open side with Sweden's enemy. Naturally, the situation of the Latvian majority only suffered from this *volte face* of the big landowners.

Majority of German Pastors Indifferent to Latvian Sufferings in the XVIII Century

As has already been stated, the XVIII century was much poorer in benevolent German pastors, particularly after the overthrow of the Swedish rule in Livonia proper and the establishment of the Russian in 1721.

According to articles IX and X of the Treaty of Nystad, signed between the Swedes and the Russians in 1721, all church liberties were to

be preserved by the latter in Livonia, while the Greek-Orthodox Church was to enjoy equal rights.

The treaty also guaranteed the rights of the commoners, that is to say, of the Latvian peasants, who had been freed from serfdom by the Swedish King in 1681, and provided for the preservation of their schools. But the Russian Czar guaranteed by the same treaty the rights and privileges of the squires subservient to him. It was not long before the German squires abrogated all the provisions which were not to their exclusive benefit, and eradicated all traces of the Swedish regime.

In view of some protests voiced by Latvians and Estonians in St. Petersburg, a Landrat or Diet Counsellor of Livonia, Baron Rosen, presented in 1739 to the "Ruling Russian Senate" of St. Petersburg a declaration to the effect that the land and people of Livonia belonged to the German squires *de jure belli,* as the country had been allegedly conquered by them in the XIII century, which is not correct, because the Latvian tribal Kingdoms of Lettia and Talava submitted to the ruling Prince Bishop Albert on feudal rights. Besides Emperor Frederick II in 1224 had guaranteed their rights. The notorious Rosen declaration was later repudiated by the Germans, and Rosen's step was shown to have been made on his own initiative. In any case, it throws a grim light upon the ethical and moral attitude of the German squires. Indeed, had it not been for the Governor-General, Count P. Lacy (who was of Irish birth), they would have fully put into practice the desiderata of Baron Rosen.

The regime in Kurland was no better. There too a Pastor Steineck (of Latvian origin) had tried to intervene with the Duke in 1730 on behalf of the peasants, but the Duke did not stir. On the other hand, certain German landed nobles, converted to the Hernhutism founded by Count Zinzendorf, began to support this enlightened church movement in Livonia, and this in a way counteracted the limitless greediness of the big landowners.

The successor of Count Lacy, Count Brown (also an Irishman), continued to defend the Latvians. Obtaining the help of one of the most outstanding representatives of German enlightenment, the Pastor Eisen von Schwarzenberg, who preached in Estonia, he succeeded in getting the latter in 1764 to present a memorandum to Catherine II on the brutal regime established in Livonia by the German landlords.

Catherine undertook to induce the Livonian Diet in 1765 to liberalize the regime, but to no effect: the desiderata were voted for, but never realized.

Also the prospect of a tenants' *magna charta* presented to the Diet by a liberal Baron Schoulz was rejected and he himself was ostracized because he had put it into effect on his own estates.

The next striking event in Latvia's social history was the publication of a book, *Die Letten,* in 1796, in Leipzig, by Garlieb Merkel, the son of a Livonian pastor; this was a bitter indictment of the German lords. It is interesting to note that the Superintendent-General of the Lutheran Church, Karl Zontag, encouraged Merkel in its publication.

The heir to the czarist throne, Grand-Duke Alexander, was greatly influenced by Garlieb Merkel's book. Later, as Emperor Alexander I, he tried to better the position of the oppressed Latvian peasants. The famous French revolutionist and protagonist of the estate of the commoners, Abbe Sieyes, translated excerpts from *Die Letten* into French.

It remains a sad fact, however, that throughout the XVIII century only two German pastors openly raised their voices in protest against the bloodiest and most brutal period of domination of German squires in Latvian history: Eisen and Zontag.

It must not be forgotten, however, that pastors of other nationalities were kindly toward the Latvians. Thus, Pastor G. Stender (1714-1796) of Flemish descent, wrote several works in Latvian and was the author of the first illustrated Latvian ABC (in 1765), of the first Latvian dictionary, and of a textbook of natural history. He collected Latvian folk songs, tales, riddles, etc. His son Alexander followed in his footsteps. There was also Pastor K. Watson, of Scottish descent, who was editor of the first Latvian newspaper "Latweeschu Awihses," published in 1822 in Mitau, in the printing office of J. Stavenhagen, a Dutchman, who was Ducal printer from 1769 and who had published in 1797 - 1798 a Latvian almanac and other books in Latvian.

The Moravian Brethren in Livonia

As a reaction against the imposed Protestant pastors of the German race, already in 1736 the movement of the Moravian Brethren began, called simply the congregations of the Brethren by the Latvians. In 1737 the Moravian Brethren established the first normal school in Livonia. The movement became so potent and dynamic that the German Lutheran pastors and their patrons, the big landowners, became afraid that they might lose their grip on the souls of the rural population. It is known that the German pastors were actually the agents of the landlords and preached that the Latvians were predestined to remain a class of tenants. Their sole hope was to get remuneration after death for their obedient patience, which Martin Luther also urged on the German peasants when they began the mass insurrections against their landlords. The dogma was that the secular order had been established by the laws of God and that no one dared to change it. But the Moravian Brethren dared, and were therefore denounced in St. Petersburg.

In 1743 the Russian Government forbade the activity of the Moravian Brethren. But the enlightened Catherine II in 1764 granted permission to the Moravian Brethren to renew their activities. However, only in 1770 was this achieved in Latvia. The main objection of the German-Balts against the Moravian Brethren was that they tried to create a "peasant aristocracy" among the Latvians.

One of the reasons why in 1765 the Livonian Diet introduced the law of primary education in parish schools, was to detract the Latvians from the Moravian Brethren schools, which operated clandestinely in Livonia regardless of the Russian decree of 1743.

The doctrine of the Moravian Brethren as an enlightened one was also supported by Alexander I, who in 1817 repeated the decree of Catherine II regarding the freedom of preaching by the Moravian Brethren. Regardless of the persecutions, the ranks of the Moravian Brethren grew. In 1843 there were in Livonia twenty-four congregations of the Moravian Brethren and ninety-two tabernacles (often school houses and even barns were used as such).

Latvian National Religious Movement Takes Sway in XIX Century

As is known, the collapse of the French revolution and the defeat of Napoleon opened for the victorious powers, particularly Russia and Prussia, the road to domination of Europe. The primary idea was to liberate Europe from the "tyranny" of Napoleon. The consequence, as is known, was the establishment of a new "collective tyrant" of Europe, the so-called "Holy Alliance" consisting of Russia, Prussia and Austria, dedicated to the oppression of freedom and of liberal ideas. This was also felt in Latvia. The sensible Czar Alexander I, who after reading G. Merkel's book, promised himself to better the situation of the Latvians and in 1804 by a czarist decree had created in Latvia the "estate of free hereditary tenants," in 1817, after the defeat of Napoleon, changed his mind and approved the decrees of the Livonian Diet of the nobles, providing for the liberation of the serfs from bondage, but not granting them land of their own. The former "hereditary free tenants" became free as the birds, but without nests, and were placed at the mercy of the big landowners. In fact, they became "hereditary proletarians" and their land was taken from them as ransom for their freedom. This land was given to the German squires, the "backbone of the czarist throne." This only deepened the social abyss between the Latvian majority and the oligarchist German minority, which persisted in its "rights" and privileges of the "master race."

The first half of the XIX century did not see many pro-Latvian German pastors either. The most prominent of them was Bishop K. Ullmann,

who organized primary schools, published textbooks and hymnals, and translated foreign works into Latvian. But he had his purpose, to promote the assimilation of the Latvians by the Germans. For this he was severely censored by the German squires who needed cheap farm laborers, not equals.

The European nationalist movement of the second half of the XIX century, however, had repercussions in Latvian minds, too. After having been freed from serfdom in 1817 - 1819, and in spite of having been left landless in the process, the Latvians began to gain more personal rights, became wealthier in the cities, and instinctively turned toward a national life.

The Fifties of the XIX century mark both the beginning of the Latvian political national ideology and emancipation from German religious domination.

From 1850, the beginning of the national awakening, national secular interests appeared, and the new Latvian middle class was eager to send its children to gymnasiums and universities. Latvian folklore, history and philology were especially favored. The Moravian Brethren movement gradually lost its role and ceded the leadership to the new Latvian intellectuals. A heavy blow was dealt to the movement when one of its prominent representatives, D. Balodis, in 1845 adopted the Greek-Orthodox creed and began to convert Latvians in Livonia to the "Russian creed." The Russian clergy did not spare promises of various facilities for the converts and particularly lured the Latvian landless population with hopes of land of their own. In order to counteract this Russification, the German oligarchic Diet of Livonia in 1849 opened a peasants' mortgage bank and permitted the big landowners to sell land to the peasants.

The situation was aggravated by the attitude of the Russian Government, which insisted on the strong application of the law forbidding the converts to return to their former creed or baptize their children according to another rite. In mixed marriages the Greek-Orthodox supremacy was upheld. Many Lutheran pastors (93) were persecuted for the infringement of this law. Eventually the Russian Emperor Alexander II ordered these persecutions to cease. As a result of this complicated situation new sects beside the Moravian Brethren appeared, among them the Baptists, who soon attained great success.

The Evangelical Brethren, Adventists, Methodists and similar purely religious and strongly Latvian national congregations also appeared. Duly ordained Latvian pastors began to preach in the Lutheran parishes. The shallow sermons of the German pastors, who hardly spoke Latvian, concerning alcoholism (which the landlords fostered by selling alcohol in their taverns), card playing and other such sins with which the parishes con-

tinued to be monotonously plied, lost all attraction and persuasion. It became obvious that the role of the German pastors was either ended or that they had to become real pastors—not heirs of the parishes of their fathers as a good income. Some twenty such hereditary German pastor families existed in Latvia and some of them had inherited their parishes for eight generations. The Latvian intellectuals in their newspapers denounced these and other misuses. The national consciousness of the Latvians was strengthened. They looked to their own cultural and religious leadership.

Latvian Pastors Become Cultural Leaders of the Latvian Nation

Although the Latvians at the end of the XIX century already had access to the Lutheran Theological Faculty of Dorpat (Tartu) University, and their numbers increased among graduate pastors, it was the practice of the ruling German minority to ignore Latvian candidates to the pastorate office, and many of them had to change their occupation, being unable to obtain parishes. Up to 1905 about 200 Latvians had graduated from the Theological Faculty at the University of Dorpat, but only eighty-five were ordained. The German-dominated General Consistorium of Riga for the Baltic provinces made it most difficult for non-Germans to obtain the *Venia concionandi* or permission for preaching. A faultless knowledge of German was demanded and, when there was a Latvian candidate to get rid of, Greek, Latin and Hebrew were also required. Latvian pastors had perforce to be expert theologians. Nevertheless, they were never accepted as professors in the Theological Faculty of the University of Dorpat. Only in 1918 were admitted as lecturers (after the Russian revolution) Dr. J. Sanders, Dr. K. Kundzins and Dr. L. K. Irbe.

The Pleiad of most distinguished Latvian pastors began to flourish toward the middle of the XIX century. It included: J. Zakranovics (1836 - 1908), K. Kundzins (1850 - 1937), J. Steiks (1855 - 1932) and J. Sanders (1858 -). The number of prominent pastors born in the Sixties and Seventies is still larger: Bishop K. Irbe (1861 - 1930), V. Olavs (1867 - 1917), K. Beldavs (1868 - 1936), P. Gailitis (b. 1869), Bishop J. Grinbergs (1869 - 1923), V. Maldons (1870 - 1939), B. Berzins (b. 1870) and Archbishop T. Grinbergs (b. 1876). All these Lutheran pastors were the real cultural leaders of their nation. They published various works and periodicals in literary Latvian, opened high schools, organized literary societies, and must be credited with fostering Latvian culture, history and folklore.

Among the Baptist preachers several Latvians held high places, particularly Dr. J. A. Freijs (b. 1863) and V. Fetlers (b. 1883).

Catholic priests of Latvian origin likewise showed the same energy

and devotion in the social and educational fields. Among them excel the following Latgallian priests: Fr. Trasuns (1864 - 1926), Mgr. Nicodemus Rancans (1870 - 1937), a distinguished preacher, historian and school principal, Fr. Kasimir Skrinda (1875 - 1919), and an ardent patriot, Bishop Jezups Rancans (b. 1886), who was most active in organizing the Latgallian movement for a united Latvia and who in 1930 became elected Vice-President of the Latvian Parliament. Already before that he had been very active in the Latvian National Council at Valka in 1917, in the State Council at Riga in 1918, and was the first Envoy to the Holy See, from which he obtained the *de facto* recognition of Latvia. He was instrumental in the signing of a concordate between the Vatican and Latvia (in 1922).

Next to Bishop Rancans, mention must be made of Bishop B. Sloskans (b. 1893); together they were the organizers of the Catholic Seminary of Riga and of the Catholic Theological department at the Riga University.

Mgr. J. Camanis (b. 1884) is an important publicist and pedagogue. He was Vice-Minister of Education from 1934 and is now Latvia's acting Envoy at the Holy See, the Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary Prof. H. Albats having been deported in 1941 to a forced labor camp in Soviet Russia.

Church Organization in Independent Latvia

Latvia's independence opened new, broader and more promising horizons to religious life. The basic law of the country recognizes full freedom of religion. Any group of fifty Latvian citizens has the right to incorporate a denomination or congregation. Ten congregations are sufficient to form a national religious association. At the same time the self-governing religious bodies were granted some public rights: to perform marriage ceremonies, christenings and baptisms, to levy voluntary taxes, establish churches, tabernacles and cemeteries as well as schools, to own buildings, to run their own presses, etc. In short, they became corporations of public importance.

The elected representatives of the parishes of the various denominations together with the pastors of the parishes form a Synod, a sort of parliament, which is the highest authority for the respective denomination.

Administratively, religious affairs are concentrated in the Department of Confessions, within the Ministry of Interior, which supervises the application and fulfillment of the legal disposition, and acts as arbiter in material affairs between confessions. The Department is aided and advised by a Council consisting of representatives of all registered religious denominations in Latvia.

Denominational schools, seminaries, etc., are subject to the Ministry of Education, and are subsidized by the Government. The Catholic

and Lutheran Theological Faculties are autonomous, like the State University itself; they obtain their budget, however, directly from the State. Poor parishes are also subsidized by the Government, which has always considered religion to be a factor of the highest importance.

Such were the general rules that applied to all religious denominations in Latvia, including the Hebrew. No single religion was especially privileged or protected. The Latvian citizen's own free will was the only guide in his joining one or other of the existing religions; religious propaganda was free, as were publications, periodicals and the right of association in general.

Some younger Latvians tried to be so thoroughly Latvian, indeed, that they began to reconstruct, from folklore and other kindred sources, an "old Latvian religion," the sect of the "Holders of God." After a short-lived sensational success, however, this fad died out, without any interference by the authorities.

The Protestant or Lutheran Church

The Synod of the Latvian Protestant Church, composed of representatives and pastors of all the parishes, elected its own Bishop in 1920, in the person of K. Irbe (1861 - 1934), a Latvian, who was duly consecrated in 1922 by the Swedish Archbishop Söderblom. His successor was Professor T. Grinbergs (b. 1870), who was elevated to the rank of Archbishop by decision of the Synod in 1933. The first task of the Latvian Bishop was, of course, to repair the churches destroyed during the war, to increase the number of pastors, to open a seminary, a denominational high school, to foster publications, and similar tasks.

The First World War and the Bolshevik persecutions during the first occupation of Latvia (December 1918 - May 1919) had sadly decreased the personnel of the clergy: many of them were killed, exiled, imprisoned or had fled. Of ninety-three Lutheran pastors in Vidzeme (Livonia), only fifty-six remained in 1920: of 103 in Kurzeme, only fifty-four. Hundreds of churches and parish and school houses were destroyed. In contrast to 194 Latvian and twenty German-Balt parishes in existence in 1920, there were again 262 Latvian and forty-nine German parishes by 1934. In 1935 the total number of Protestants in Latvia was 1,094,787 or 56.13% of the population of which those of Latvian origin constituted 93.45%.

The Lutheran Church is autonomous in Latvia, and its organization is democratic. The parish council elects the boards, and the district synods are composed of the representatives of the Provost Boards and the Provost. The Synod, the highest organ, is composed of all pastors and of one representative of every parish. It elects the Central Board and the Archbishop. Actually the Latvian Lutheran Church is an Episcopal-Synodical church.

Branches of the Protestant Church, the Baptists, Adventists, Methodists, etc., also enjoy the right of church self-government.

As has been mentioned, the Baptist church appeared in the Fifties of the XIX century as a protest against Greek-Orthodox proselytizing and the persecution of the Moravian Brethren. The Baptist movement became so strong that in 1879 the Russian Government legalized it by a governmental decree. By 1897 there were sixty-five Baptist parishes in Latvia.

German Lutherans — Separatists

Of all Protestants or Lutherans in independent Latvia, the number of German Lutherans was 61,047 in which number are included the 3,518 German citizens who came to Latvia since 1920 to make a living there. Thus actually there were only 57,529 German Lutherans with Latvian citizenship. The Protestants of Latvian origin were in the more than absolute majority. However, the German Lutherans preferred to establish a separate German-Lutheran church organization, constituting their own Synod, electing their own Bishop, and establishing their own Theological Faculty at the German Herder Institute or University in Riga. They made great efforts to maintain their own parishes, no matter how small numerically, and tried hard to continue to hold on to the largest Lutheran churches in the capital, reluctantly sharing these churches with the Latvians through the establishment of an elaborate schedule of services; for instance, the Latvian services were permitted early in the morning, from 7 - 9, or in the day time, after the German services.

There were 220,000 Latvian-speaking Lutherans in Riga (of a population of 385,000), as compared with some 35,000 German-speaking Lutherans, yet the latter demanded the biggest Cathedrals of St. Mary and of St. Peter for their exclusive use. As early as the beginning of the present century, the Latvians had been obliged to build the church of St. Gertrude by popular subscription for this reason.

In independent Latvia this became intolerable, and in 1931 by referendum, a law was passed making the Dome of St. Mary Latvian, for the use of the great majority, and the Cathedral of St. Peter was made the Cathedral of the Garrison, predominantly for Latvian Lutheran soldiers. However, the German-speaking parishes of these churches preserved the right to continue to use them by agreement with the Latvians. But the Germans would not avail themselves of this opportunity. Combined protests from Even intervention from abroad was tried, and this *Kulturkampf* only Even intervention from abroad was tried, and this Kulturkampf only ended when the Baltic Germans obeyed the call of Hitler and abandoned the entire Baltic Region in 1939 - 1940.

The Roman Catholic Church in Independent Latvia

The Catholic Church was reinstated to full rights under independent Latvia. The Concordate signed in 1922 stipulated that only prelates of Latvian origin should be appointed Archbishops and Bishops. The historic church of St. Jacob in Riga was dedicated as Cathedral for the Archbishop; holy orders and religious associations were reestablished; the Catholic faith was once more taught in schools; Catholic seminaries and high schools were opened. In 1936 the Holy See elevated Archbishop A. Springovics to the rank of Metropolitan-Archbishop and renewed the historical Bishopric of Piltene in Kurzeme (founded in 1234 and closed in 1561), appointing a Latvian citizen of Lithuanian origin, Mgr. A. Urbsis, to the diocese. Catholic chaplains were appointed to the army. The Orders of Mariavites, Franciscans, Dominicans and Jesuits once more became active in Latvia; Catholic fraternities, societies, associations and youth organizations flourished again; the Catholic press and publications were unrestricted; a Catholic party gained representation in Parliament. In Latvia in 1928 there were 146 Roman Catholic parishes, twelve Decanates, 130 churches and ten chapels of the Catholic faith. According to Bishop J. Rancans, about 450,000 Catholics of Latvian origin in 1928 were registered in Roman Catholic parishes.* Hence 81.37% of all Catholics (476,963) in Latvia were of the Latvian race. The rest were: Poles 9.96%, Lithuanians 4.60%, White-Russians 2.97% and others 1.3% of all Roman Catholics. In 1934 there were 172 Roman Catholic parishes and fourteen Decanates.

Greek-Orthodox Church Autocephalous in Latvia

The Greek-Orthodox Church in Latvia is composed of two branches. The so-called Old-believers are the followers of the Greek-Orthodox church before the great church reforms of Patriarch Nicon in the XVII century. They are in the minority, however. The youngest branch of the Greek-Orthodox Church follows the reform of Nicon.

In 1935, 174,389 Latvian inhabitants or 8.94% belonged to the reformed Greek-Orthodox Church. The majority of them were Great-Russians.

The reformed Greek-Orthodox Church, third largest faith of Latvia ranking after the Catholic Church, separated from the Patriarchate of Moscow and decided to become autocephalous and submitted directly to the Patriarch of Constantinople. The latter came personally to Riga in 1936 and consecrated the Metropolitan Archbishop of Latvia, a prelate of

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* In the symposium *Latvijas Republika Desmit Pastavesanas Gados* (Ten years of the Republic of Latvia), edited by Dr. A. Bilmanis, Riga, 1928, pp. 599-605.

Latvian origin, Augustine, who had been elected to the dignity of Metropolitan Archbishop by the Greek-Orthodox Synod of the country.

The Greek-Orthodox Church has all the same rights as the other registered religious denominations.

The above mentioned "Old-believers," who at the end of the XVII century had found a religious haven in Latvia, are also a self-governing congregation, and they enjoy all rights like other denominations. The Old-believers do not recognize the Latvian Greek-Orthodox Metropolitan, nor the Moscow Patriarch, and they maintain a Synod of their own. The Old-believers do not have bishops, but only preachers.

In 1935, 107,195 Latvian inhabitants were Old-believers, mostly of Great-Russian origin.

Other Denominations

Owing to the fact that in Latvia there existed freedom of conscience, all religions had an equal chance for development. There was no State religion in Latvia, and no religion was particularly favored by the Government. All national minorities enjoyed religious freedom.

More than ten different religious denominations in 1938 existed in Latvia. Beside the already mentioned, an Anglican Episcopalian congregation (in Riga), a Reformed Calvinist congregation, a large Baptist congregation, a Methodist church, and churches of the Moravian Brethren, as well as congregations of Evangelical Brethren, Adventists, etc., existed in Latvia, all of which could freely and openly profess their faith. Full religious freedom was also enjoyed by the Jews; and even a Mohammedan mosque was open for worship to practising Moslems in Daugavpils. All these religious creeds served to enlighten and educate the Latvian people and to create good citizens.

*Religious Distribution of Latvia's Inhabitants in 1935 according to official census:**

Religion	*Number*	*%*
Protestants	1,094,787	56.13
Roman Catholics	476,963	24.45
Greek-Orthodox	174,389	8.94
Old-believers	107,195	5.50
Hebrew	93,406	4.79
Others	3,762	0.19

From the above we see that the original religions of the Latvians have remained the predominant denominations to this day: the Protestant and the Roman Catholic.

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* A. Maldups. *Latvija Skaitlos* (Latvian Statistics), Riga, 1938, pp. 71, 72.

Religious Life in Latvia under Bolshevik Rule

The persecution of religion and of the church started in Latvia almost immediately after the establishment of the Soviet regime on July 21, 1940. The teaching of religion, once universal in all primary schools in Latvia, was abolished and forbidden. Denomination schools and religious orders were closed and their property confiscated. The Theological (Catholic and Lutheran) Faculties or departments of the State University of Latvia, at Riga, were closed. All religious publications were suppressed. All churches and their property were nationalized by the Soviets. Many churches were transformed into atheistic museums, motion picture theatres, bowling alleys, Red Army clubs, and one church in Liepaja (Libau) was even turned into a circus. Divine services were seriously curtailed, and were permitted only in a few churches. Exorbitant taxes were required from parishes and even then services were often interrupted and interfered with by Red militia men and provocative communist groups. Many clergymen were dispossessed from their parish houses, deprived of all means of living, jailed, tortured, put to hard labor in concentration camps, deported to Soviet Russia, Siberia, and many were killed. Several Jewish rabbis were subjected to the same treatment.

During the nine months of Bolshevik rule, forty-one clergymen suffered death at the hands of the Bolsheviks, are reported missing or were deported to Soviet Russia.*

Religious Life in Latvia under Nazi Occupation

As soon as the German Nazi administration was established in occupied Latvia (on July 1st, 1941) one of the first decrees of the Nazi Commissar was to reinstate the German Lutheran parish in the Dome-Cathedral of Riga. This was quite inconsistent, because all Germans, including the German pastors, had already left Latvia voluntarily in 1939 and, secondly, the attitude of the Nazis to the Christian Church, similar to that of the Bolsheviks, is negative in principle. However, the Bolsheviks wanted to abolish religion altogether and intended that a materialistic philosophy of life should suffice for mankind. They, therefore, endeavored by extirpation of the clergy and destruction of the material possibilities for existence of the Church parishes, to eliminate the Christian Church, in order through anti-religious propaganda to guide the peoples ruled by them into the fold of the "Godless Movement."

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* L. Ekis. *Truth about Bolshevik and Nazi Atrocities in Latvia.* Washington 1943. Also: *Report of the Sufferings of the Christian Churches in Latvia during* 1940-1943. Published by the monthly *Drauga Vests* (A Friend's Message), New York, 1944.

As opposed to this, the Nazis do not intend to eliminate religion wholly; they only want to find an "ersatz" for the Christian faith by a return to the ancient German gods, the incarnations of the mighty forces of nature, as it is this kind of religious philosophy which, from their viewpoint, seems to justify the existence of a National Socialist World Order. In the meantime, the Nazis are willing even to tolerate the Christian Church, provided that it does not resist a national-socialist regime and the control exercised by it, and provided that Christian precepts, as well as Christian moral principles, are not used as a criterion for the activities of the Nazis. The clergy must be "free" to be able to pray for Hitler and his regime, and must not indulge in moral lectures on the score of the excesses of the Nazi bosses.

With a "practical" Church policy of this kind, it was easy for the Nazis to give themselves airs as the antipodes of the Bolsheviks. The deeply religious peoples of the Baltic countries were, in turn, genuinely glad to be rid of the godless propaganda of the Bolsheviks. Moreover, the German occupants put no obstacles at all in the way of the Baltic peoples to spontaneously restore their previous offices. The fact that the occupants declared the churches with all the lands and properties appertaining thereto, which had been nationalized by the Bolsheviks, as the "heritage of the German State," and that here and there, as for example in Liepaja (Libau), the occupants reserved the undamaged churches for Divine Service of their "Volkszugehörigen" (nationals), while the Latvian congregations were given ravaged churches, seemed to the faithful of slight importance in comparison with the regained autonomy of the church parishes.

For almost a whole year matters were allowed to drift in the way described above. It seemed only advantageous to the occupants ever and again to compare the position of the Church during the Bolshevik period with their times and to brag of their "religious tolerance," "in the sense of a general tolerance to which only the German people, with their understanding for national and cultural differences of other peoples, are really capable" (the "Deutsche Zeitung im Ostland" of June 20, 1942). Then, however, the time seemed ripe for the occupants to explain to the Baltic peoples that in the National Socialist Reich the Church was subordinate to the State and that the Church functionaries must be subject to control by the State.

On June 19, 1942, Reich Commissar Lohse issued his "Decree concerning the legal status of religious organizations."*

The explanations of the "Deutsche Zeitung im Ostland" lift the veil from the "religious tolerance" of the German occupants; the latter are just

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* *Latvia Under German Occupation.* Washington, 1943, pp. 64-68.

as afraid of a church activity of the people as are the Bolsheviks. During the independence of the Baltic States, their peoples enjoyed true religious freedom and there could be no question of anyone misusing the Church as a "political tool." Only in the Dictator states, where the peoples are deprived of democratic rights, is the administration anxious to assume control of Church activities, as of everything else in the life of the people, so that no one beside the ruling party may make use of the Church for his purposes. It is quite evident that the Commissars General in the Baltic countries did not prohibit, but rather ordered that prayers be offered in churches for the aims of the one political party, the National Socialist Party, and that money be collected for it. It is not clear, however, what will be done in the case of divine services of the kind that, for instance, are broadcast from Latvia, in which prayers are offered for "Latvia and her future." Such prayers could easily be interpreted as "endangering public order and security." It is possible that this fact has even constituted one of the grounds for the issuance of the above-mentioned decree.

The Commissar General had the right to dissolve every religious organization which, according to his opinion, "did not confine itself to the fulfillment of religious tasks." Moreover, paragraph 3 of the decree means a direct interference by the political administration in the management of the Church. The hypocritical formulation of the second point, wherein it is stated that a member of the board "loses" (sic!) his office if the Commissar General "raises against him objections of a general political nature," simply means that the Commissar General may himself choose the board of any religious organization and, by so doing, may create a committee which would elect the preacher and other functionaries of the church in accordance with the wishes of the administration.

Through the new decree of the Reich Commissar, the Baltic peoples were placed in the same position in which they were at the end of the last century in regard to the church administration, when the German Baltic large estate owners exercised the right of patronage over the churches and compelled the church parishes to accept their (the landowner's) candidates for pastor—which often gave rise to dissent between patron and parish. At that time endeavours were made to install German Baltic preachers instead of the local candidates in church offices. Now, however, the "Deutsche Zeitung im Ostland" tells us that

> "Members of a given nation will be taken care of by pastors belonging to the same nationality."

This explanation, however, only shows that the occupants themselves understood well enough how the Baltic peoples will value their "religious tolerance."

Conclusion

Religion is considered in Latvia to be a sign of supreme vitality and of sound national growth of a nation. Latvians believe that religious nations will always flourish and that religion constitutes the natural bridge to other countries, the best guarantee of sound international collaboration. This is an occidental conception of life, fully shared by the Latvian nation. Only a deeply religious nation, with pastors that are really devoted to their calling, can withstand the great upheavals and shocks that come to them from time to time, and only such a nation can still preserve in its course, basing all its hopes on faith. Religion and the religious discipline of life cannot be replaced by political parties in a community. Thanks to its religious past, the Latvian nation, like the Lithuanian and Estonian nations, found the courage to resist all subversive teachings of the modern dictatorships: Nazism and Bolshevism.

The highest development of church life in Latvia occurred after the proclamation of National Unity in 1934 as the basis of state life. Religion was again given a prominent role in schools, in the army and in social life, and the social order was strengthened by sound moral tenets. The results of education improved and crime declined.

The Latvians always start and end their work with a prayer: *Nu, ar Dieva paligu!* (With God's help).

Religion gave the Latvian nation the courage to withstand the Bolshevik terror. It likewise aided the people of Latvia to oppose Nazi subjugation.

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Since the above was written the fast moving events have again changed the Latvian Church situation. On October 13, 1944 Riga was again occupied by the Bolsheviks who reinstated immediately the Bolshevik regime in breach of international law and the principles of the Atlantic Charter.

We can only pray that eventually both political and religious liberty may again be restored to the Latvian Nation and Church so long "under the cross."

Chronology of Religious Events in Latvia

I cent. A.D.—Chronicles of Monk Nestor report that Apostle Andreas, brother of St. Peter, visited Baltic shores during his missionary work.

XI cent.—According to chronicles of the Bishopric of Hamburg written by Bishop Adam of Bremen, Scandinavian missionaries Hiltuin and Johannes around the middle of the century preached in Baltic lands.

1048 The same chronicler relates that Danish King Sven Estridson built a church at Domesneas in northern Kurland.

XII cent.—Around the middle of the century Scandinavian missionary Fulco preaches in Baltic lands.

1180 As reported by the chronicler Henricus de Lettis in his *Origines Livoniae,* covering the period 1180 - 1227, the German missionary Friar Meinhard of the Augustinians arrives in Latvia to preach the Gospel among the Livs, who dwelt on the Latvian Baltic outlet. Meinhard established his residence at Ykeskola, a Livian settlement on the right bank of the river Daugava, south of the big cataracts, rich in salmon, lampreys, eels and other fish to this very day.

1184 Friar Meinhard signs treaty of spheres of influence with the Great Prince of Polotzk, Wladimir, who for munificent gifts permits him to preach among the Livs, previously baptized by the Greek-Orthodox priests. (They had evidently washed off the Greek-Orthodox baptism as they did later with Meinhard's baptism.)

1186 Meinhard builds two castles of stone—one at Ykeskola and the other on the Daugava island Holm, opposite the Semigallian Port, and places military forces in the castles. The Semigallians, a Latvian tribe living south of the Daugava storm the castles, but without success.

—Meinhard nominated Bishop of Livs by Archbishop of Bremen.

1187 The Livs revolt against Meinhard and wash off the baptism in the Daugava or Duna river. Somehow peace is established, but Livs do not let Meinhard leave Ykeskola.

1191 Meinhard's coadjutor, Theoderich of the Cistercienses, who preaches among the Livs of Thoreida on the estuary of the Gauja river, expelled by Estonians after he tries to baptize them. At that time baptism meant: subjection to the baptizer.

1196 Theoderich, who skillfully escaped from Livs, in Rome obtains permission from Pope Celestine to organize crusade against the heathen Baltic peoples, particularly the Kuronians. However, the crusade ends without success.

—Death of Bishop Meinhard.

1197 Berthold, Abbot of the Cistercienses at Lucca, but of German race, appointed second Bishop of Livs. He arrives at Ykeskola, distributes rich gifts to Livonian elders, like Meinhard, but owing to demand of hostages from Livian elders, is forced to flee from Ykeskola. In Rome he obtains permission from Pope Celestine to preach a crusade against the "treacherous" Livs.

1198 Bishop Berthold arrives with crusaders before Ykeskola, but has to retreat to nearby Riga, where on July 24, a battle takes place in which Berthold is killed. The Livs, however, are defeated. After departure of crusa-

ders in September, the Livs revolt and expell all clericals. Only one German merchant ship remains, the merchants having paid a ransom.

—Meanwhile Archbishop Hartwich II of Bremen nominates as Bishop of Livs his nephew Albert, who instantly prepares a crusade against the Livs, choosing Visby in Gotland as starting point.

1200 Albert arrives at the mouth of Riga with 23 ships manned by crusaders. He conquers the Livs, takes the sons of Livian elders hostages and extorts from the elders the lease of a base near the old trading port Riga, where he establishes his residence.

1201 Friar Theoderich obtains from Pope Innocent III a Bull proclaiming a new crusade against the Livs and promising forgiveness of all sins to the "pilgrims," and another Bull proclaiming an interdict against the Port of the Semigallians not far from Riga, on the left bank of the river Daugava. The purpose is to favor the trade of the German merchants at Riga.

—Bishop Albert dedicates his Bishopric and all the lands nearby to St. Mary: it is the beginning of the Terra Mariana, which exists until 1561.

—Treaty of Friendship signed with the Kuronians, the overlords of the Livs, who received news about Albert establishing a base near Riga. In the same year Albert also signs a treaty with the Lithuanians.

1202 Brother of Bishop Albert, Friar Engelbert, appointed Abbot of the Convent of the Canonici of the Dom of Riga (wearing the black habit of the Augustins). Convent of Cistercienses built at the mouth of the Daugava river and Friar Theoderich appointed first Abbot.

—The Order of the *Fratres Militae Christi* (Brethren of Christ's Militia) established as military force of the Bishopric by Friar Theoderich with permission of Pope Innocent III. The F.M.C. obtain rights of the Knights Templars.

1203 The Semigallians sign treaty of peace with Bishop Albert.

1204 Livian elder Kaupo of Thoreida brought by Theoderich to Rome, where Pope Innocent receives him in friendly manner and bestows rich gifts, hundred gold coins and a Bible copied personally by Pope Gregory. Kaupo becomes vassal of Bishop Albert.

1205 King Veceke (evidently the rank mixed with the name because in Latvian "Vecakais" means elder) of Kukeynos signs treaty with Bishop Albert.

1206 Albert begins pertractations with Great Prince of Polotzk, Wladimir. Livonian elder Akko organizes coalition of Livs, Slavs of Polotzk, and Lithuanians against Albert. Center of coalition is castle Holm on the Duna island occupied by the Livs. German crusaders with help of Kaupo storm Holm. Akko killed. Reprisals against the Livs of Thoreida follow. Eventually all Liv inhabited territories subjected to Albert.

1207 Albert submits his Bishopric as *feudum oblatum* to the German King Philip. Terra Mariana becomes principality of the Holy Roman Empire.

—*June*. King Veceke of Kokeynos becomes vassal of Bishop Albert for promises of help against Lithuanians. Veceke cedes half of his land and half of his castle to Albert.

—Bishop Albert grants Order of Brethren of Christ's Militia for sustenance one third of all Livonia and all other lands to be conquered.

1208 Selpils or Selburg, the stronghold of the Latvian tribe of the Selonians living on the left bank of the middle Daugava, occupied by Order and

hostages taken. The Selonians are baptized.

—Priest Henricus de Lettis, author of the chronicles *Origines Livoniae,* appointed provost at a church in Tolova, in northern Latvia. Priest Allobrand baptizes the Latvians at Ymera in northeastern Latvia.

—Brethren of Order provoke feud with King Veceke, who, anticipating persecutions for killed German intruders, flees from country. Also the Selonians who were with King Veceke flee.

—Great Prince of Polotzk, Wladimir, who promised help to King Veceke, fails to keep promise.

—Arrival in Riga of several prominent prelates: the Abbot Florentius Cassius of the Cistercienses, the Canonicus of the Dom of Cologne, Robertus Gilbanus, and others.

1209 Invasion of Estonia begun by Order.

—Latvian King Vissevald of Lettia or Latgallia (north of the middle Daugava) converted to Roman Catholic faith from Greek-Orthodox. The chronicler relates that in Guerceke, his capital, there were two Greek-Orthodox churches. King Vissevald cedes ⅔ of his lands to Bishop Albert for promised protection.

1211 Parish school at the Dom of Riga opened.

—Count Bernhard of Lippe appointed Abbot of the Convent of Cistercienses as successor of Theoderich who is nominated Bishop of Estonia.

1212 Pope Innocent III takes converted Latvians and Livs under his protection.

—King of Denmark arrives in Riga with other crusaders to invade Estonia.

1213 Bishop Albert of Riga freed from jurisdiction of the Archbishop of Bremen and is subjected directly to the Holy See.

1214 Latvian King Talivald of Tolova, bordering in the north with Estonians and in the east with Slavs of Pskov, converted from Greek-Orthodox faith to Roman Catholic. For promised protection he cedes ⅔ of his lands to Bishop Albert.

1215 Pope Innocent III confirms name of Bishopric of Livonia—*Terra Mariana,* as a counterpart of the *Terra Filii* in Palestine.

—Pope Innocent III by Bull: *Ne affligatis* reiterates warning to German crusaders in Livonia to abstain from atrocities.

1217 Pope Honorius III repeats warning.

—Death of Kaupo, who by will leaves his possessions to the Church.

1219 Count Bernhard of Lippe appointed Bishop of Semigallia. In historical documents he is also mentioned as Bishop of Selonia. Bishop Bernhard is consecrated by his son Bishop Otto of Utrecht.

1220 Being refused help by Emperor Frederick II, Bishop Albert submits to King of Denmark, but under condition that the Order, the burghers of Riga and the converted Latvians and Livs give their agreement. In view of great opposition of German Order and burghers, Albert's submission nullified in 1222 and *status quo ante* restituted. It is interesting to note that certain opposing Livs were imprisoned.

1222 Pope Honorius III threatens German crusaders with excommunication and interdict in case of continuation of brutalities in Latvia.

1224 Emperor Frederick II by manifesto extends his protection to converted Latvians and Livs and guarantees their rights and freedom, as free citizens of the Roman Empire.

—Papal Delegate Bishop William of Modena (later Cardinal of Sabina) ar-

rives in Riga to investigate situation.

1225 Selonian Bishopric (established in 1218) incorporated into Semigallian Bishopric.

—Pope Honorius III proclaims the converted Baltic peoples *Children of God,* enjoying equal rights with all other Christian people.

1229 Death of Bishop Albert who is glorified by German historians as the great colonizer of the Baltic.

1230 Bishop Balduin of Alna as a delegate of the Papal Nuncio in Denmark, the Cardinal Prince Otto Colonna, arrives in Riga to settle dispute between Bishops-candidates nominated—one by the Riga Dom-Capitul and the other by the Archbishop of Bremen. The candidate of the Riga Dom-Capitul, Bishop Nicholaus, prevails.

—*December* 28. Papal Delegate Bishop Balduin of Alna signs treaty of friendship in the name of Pope Gregory IX with King Lamekin of Kurland.

1232 Bishop Balduin appointed Bishop-at-large of Livonia.

—Pope Gregory IX ratifies treaty with King Lamekin. King Lamekin, however, disappears and is probably killed by German crusaders, who break the treaty.

1233 Kuronian ambassadors appear in Rome before Pope Gregory IX with complaints against the Order.

1234 Bishopric of Kurland established.

—Cardinal William of Sabina appointed Papal Delegate to Semigallia, Kuronia and Livonia—all three Latvian provinces. Simultaneously Pope Gregory IX opens investigation of misdeeds of Order.

1236 September 22. Order of Brethren of Christ's Militia defeated at Saule by joint forces of Latvians and Lithuanians.

1237 Pope Gregory IX issues Bull: *Non Obstantibus,* warning German crusaders from brutalities against converted Baltic peoples.

—*May* 14. Remnants of Order of Brethren of Christ's Militia join the Order of Teutonic Knights as subdivision, henceforth known as the Livonian Order.

1245 Emperor Frederick II authorizes Livonian Order to conquer the stubbornly opposing baptism Kurland and Semigallia.

1246 Albert Suerbeer, Primate of Ireland and Archbishop of Armagh, appointed Papal Delegate by Pope Innocent IV to Baltic lands.

1254 Albert Suerbeer appointed Prince-Archbishop of Riga.

1255 Archbishop Albert appointed also Metropolitan of Prussia, Kuronia, Livia, Lettia and Estonia.

1260 *July* 12. United Latvians and Lithuanians defeat Livonian Order at Durbe. On September 20 Prussians begin insurrection against order of Teutonic Knights.

1266 Parish school at St. George's Cathedral in Riga opened.

1267 Kuronians sign "eternal peace" with Otto, Master of Livonian Order, which results in their enslavement.

1270 According to Nestor's chronicles, Latvian painter Friar Jurgis illuminates Slavonic Bible with miniatures.

1281 Semigallian Bishopric incorporated into Kuronian Bishopric.

1290 Semigallia conquered by Livonian Order, but Semigallians refuse to submit. Their warriors retreat to Lithuanian lands and continue the struggle.

1297-1492—Feud between the burghers of Riga and the Livonian Order.

1299 Semigallian Ambassadors appear before Pope Boniface VIII in Rome with complaints against Livonian Order.

1312 Pope Clement V receives 230 articles of complaint against Order from Archbishop of Riga.

—Papal Delegate Moliano arrives in Riga to investigate accusations against Livonian Order.

1313 Pope Clement V excommunicates Livonian Order.

1318 Pope Johan XXII denounces Livonian Order in Bull.

1325 Archbishop Frederick of Riga proclaims Papal excommunication and interdict on Livonian Order in presence of Papal Delegate, Bishop Moliano.

1330 Anti-Pope Nicholas V recognizes Livonian Order's supremacy over Archbishop of Riga.

1353 Parish school at the Cathedral of St. Peter in Riga opened.

1354 Papal Delegate to Riga, Bishop Moliano, proclaims interdict and excommunicates Livonian Order.

1374 Archbishop of Riga, Siegfried v. Blomberg, complains about Livonian Order to Pope Gregory XI.

1391 Archbishop of Riga, Sintenis, repeats complaints to Pope Boniface IX.

1394 Pope Boniface IX sides with Livonian Order.

1397 Pope Benedict XIII grants Livonian Order privilege to nominate the Archbishop of Riga and the other bishops of Livonia.

1441 Livonian Order emancipates from overlordship of the Order of Teutonic Knights.

1450 Pope Eugene IV accuses Livonian Order of atrocities against Latvians.

1477 Archbishop Sylvester of Riga curses the Livonian Order as a "Child of Satan." Master of Livonian Order imprisons Archbishop, who dies in prison in 1479.

1509 Archbishop Jaspar Linde of Riga promotes primary education in Livonian parishes.

1522 Martin Luther's reformation gains sway in Riga.

1525 Grand Master of Livonian Order Walter von Plettenberg recognizes equal rights of Lutheran church in Riga. Council of Riga composed of Germans confiscates property of Catholic Church, fraternities, orders and other religious organizations in Riga.

1526 Archbishop of Riga and other Bishops of Livonia recognize supremacy of Grand Master of Livonian Order.

1555 Grand Master of Livonian Order von Galen signs the peace of Augsburg, reaffirming toleration of Protestants.

1556 Grand Master of Livonian Order takes Archbishop of Riga, Markgrave William of Brandenburg, prisoner.

1557 Polish King Sigismund II in ultimatum demands liberation of imprisoned Archbishop, his cousin. Livonian Order gives in, and signs treaty of Posvol with Lithuania, promising not to renew treaty with Muscovy without Lithuania's prior agreement. That causes war with Muscovy.

1559 Bishop Johann von Muenchhousen (of German race) sells his Bishoprics Piltene in Kurland and Oesel in Estonia to King of Denmark.

1560 In Sventoja church (south of Liepaja or Libau) religious manuscripts in Kuronian language found.

—Duke Magnus, brother of King of Denmark, takes possession of Piltene.

1561 Partitioning of Livonia between Poland, Sweden and Denmark:
Sweden takes Estonia;
Denmark—the Estonian island Oesel, and Piltene in north Kurland;
Poland—Livonia proper north of the Daugava.
Kurland, Semigallia and Selonia south of the river Daugava become a Duchy under the suzerainty of the Polish King.

1562 Livonian Order disbanded. Knights secularized and appropriate church lands.

1567 Duke Gothard of Kurland builds 70 new churches in Kurland, in addition to only 9 functioning.

1575 A Latvian, Johan Zonne, mentioned as one of Lutheran assistant-pastors.

1582 Roman-Catholic Archbishopric reestablished in Riga by Polish King.

1583 Catholic counter-reformation in Livonia. College of Order of Jesuits opened in Riga. Roman Catholic Bishopric established in Wenden.

1584 Burghers of Riga revolt against Gregorian calendar reform and expel Jesuits.

1585 Father Jesuits of the Wilno College publish Latvian version of Catechism of St. Peter Canisius.

1586 Enchiridion or Christian handbook including Luther's so-called Little Catechism published in Latvian version in Riga.

1590 Parish school at St. John's church in Riga opened.

1591 College of Jesuits reopened in Riga.

1615 Latvian Lutheran Hymnal published.

1622 College in Riga opened by King Gustavus Adolphus.

1626 Under Swedish pressure College of Jesuits transferred from Riga (Swedish Livonia) to Daugavpils or Dunaburg in Latgale, a Polish dependency then called Polish Livonia or Inflantes.

1630 Lutheran parish organization established in Livonia proper by Swedish Crown.

1632 School at the church of St. Gertrude in Riga opened.
—Lutheran Theological Faculty opened at the University of Dorpat—a Swedish foundation.

1649 Superintendent General of Lutheran Church in Kurland, P. Einhorn (of German race), publishes *Historia Lettica* with information about Latvian heathen religion.

1654 Pastor Mancelius publishes Latvian prayerbook. Latvian Lutheran pastors Janis Kapcus of Straupe and Matis Auzins of Ergeme mentioned in contemporary documents.

1679 Roman Catholic Bishopric of Wenden or Cesis transferred to Daugavpils.

1681 Swedish government abolishes serfdom and bondage in Latvia. Pastor E. Glueck at Aluksne establishes Latvian normal school with 2 years' courses.

1689 Translation of the Bible into Latvian completed by Pastor E. Glueck under auspices of Superintendent General J. Fisher, and published with financial help of Swedish Government.

1694 Convent of Dominican Order founded in Latgale, at Pasiene.

1700 Convent of Dominican Order established in Aglona, Latgale.

1710 V. Steineck of Latvian race ordained in Kurland as Lutheran pastor.

1721 Under Treaty of Nystad Russian Czar promises preservation of Swedish religious and school institutions in Livonia. Greek-Orthodox Church obtains equal rights with Protestant in Livonia.

1730 Roman Catholic prayerbook printed in Latvian version.
1736 Sect of Moravian Brethren appears in Livonia.
1737 Latvian Normal school opened by Moravian Brethren in Valmiera.
1743 Sect of Moravian Brethren persecuted by German landed nobility and German Lutheran Clergy because of dangerous competition and "fostering formation of Latvian peasant aristocracy." Russian Government closes prayerhouses of Moravian Brethren in Livonia. However, the Moravian Brethren secretly continue their gatherings.
1753 Convent of Bernhardines established in Latgale.
1757 Catholic seminary opened in Kraslava in Latgale.
1764 Sect of Moravian Brethren again permitted in Russia proper.
—Livonian German Pastor Eisen v. Schwarzenberg's memorandum on precarious peasant situation in Livonia published by Academy of Science in St. Petersburg.
—Pastor Eisen received in personal audience by Empress Catherine II.
1765 Under pressure of Russian Government Livonian Diet of German nobles decides:
1) to reestablish primary education in parishes,
2) to alleviate situation of tenants,
3) not to sell serfs without their families.
Only the first paragraph was partly realized, the other two remained on paper.
1770 Moravian Brethren again permitted to be active in Livonia.
1795 Livonian pastor's son, Garlieb Merkel (of German race) publishes ardent appeal in favor of oppressed Latvians under title *Die Letten*. Future Czar Alexander I reads pamphlet and in 1804 creates estate of "free hereditary tenants." During 1817 - 1819 liberates serfs in Latvia, although without land of their own, the land being kept by the German landed nobles as ransom for the personal freedom granted to them.
1802 Theological Faculty opened at the University of Dorpat.
1819 Latvian Literary Society founded in Mitau.
1822 First Latvian newspaper *Latweeschu Awihses* (Latvian Gazette) published in Mitau by Pastor K. Watson, of Scottish descent.
1824 Latvian Literary Society founded in Riga.
1832 Latvians obtain right to settle in cities.
1833 Normal school for Latvians opened in Cirava.
1839 Cimse's normal school opened in Valka.
1840 Normal school opened in Irlava.
—Roman Catholic Monastery of Aglona in Latgale transformed by Russian Government into prison for clerics (monastery finally closed in 1870).
1841 Greek-Orthodox Bishopric established in Riga.
1843 Sect of Moravian Brethren, which is a reaction against Lutheran Church dominated by German pastors in Livonia, reaches highest development, with 24 parishes and 92 tabernacles.
1845 In connection with famine, Greek-Orthodox priests begin proselytizing with promises of relief, free land and other facilities.
1847 Greek-Orthodox seminary with free fellowships for Latvians opened in Riga.
1849 Latvian tenant-farmers obtain right to buy land of their own. Latvian middle class appears. National awakening begins.

1850 In reaction to Moravian Brethren, a part of whom let themselves be converted to Greek-Orthodox creed, new religious sect of Baptists becomes widely spread in Latvia. From then on Moravian Brethren movement declines, partly owing to appearance of more secular interests of Latvian middle class.

1862 Progressive newspaper *Peterburgas Awihses* (the Gazette of Petersburg) published in St. Petersburg by K. Valdemars, K. Barons, and J. Allunans. In 1865 suppressed because of German intrigues.

1868 The Latvian Central Society of Riga (a literary and social club) founded.

—Philologist A. Kronvalds publishes treatise in German about Latvian National Aspirations.

1869 First political Latvian weekly *Baltijas Wehstnesis* (Baltic Courier) appears in Riga.

1870 Sect of Evangelical Brethren, affiliated with Baptists, established in Riga.

1871 Parish teachers' school opened.

1873 First Latvian National Singing Festival organized and Latvian National Anthem—*God Bless Latvia*—performed.

1877 First Latvian daily *Rigas Lapa* (Riga News) appears.

1879 Russian Government by decree permits open profession of Baptist religion.

1883 Beginning of Russification.

1886 Radical Latvian Daily *Dienas Lapa* (Daily Paper) appears.

1897 65 Baptist parishes registered in Latvia. Reaction against German dominated Lutheran Church grows.

1905 Conference of Latvian pastors repudiates the medieval patronate rights of big landowners or German-dominated general-Consistoriums to appoint pastors to parishes. Free election of pastors by parishes advocated. About 20 German pastor families in Latvia practically establish hereditary rights to their parishes. Some of them keep parishes for 8 to 9 generations in the same family. Parishes considered as a dowry to German pastors' daughters.

—Latvian Revolution reacts sharply against German reactionary Lutheran pastors, who dominate Latvian parishes, being themselves in the minority. Of about 200 parishes in Latvia only 20 consist of Germans.

1918 Independent Latvia proclaims freedom of conscience and cultural autonomy for national minorities.

—Pope Benedict XV reestablishes Roman Catholic Bishopric in Riga.

1920 A Latvian Roman Catholic prelate A. Springovics, appointed Bishop of Riga.

—Monsignor A. Ratti, later elected Pope Pius XI, arrives in Riga as Apostolic Delegate.

1922 Latvian Lutheran Bishop, K. Irbe, invested by Archbishop of Sweden, J. Söderblom.

—Concordat signed with the Holy See. Archbishopric of Riga reestablished. Bishop A. Springovics elevated to the rank of Archbishop. Eventually 142 Roman Catholic parishes exist again in free Latvia, as well as various Catholic welfare organizations, schools, seminaries, Holy Orders, fraternities, press, etc.

1928 Papal Nuncius A. Cecchini accredited to the President of Latvian Republic.

1932 Latvian Lutheran Bishop elevated to the rank of Archbishop.

1934 Liberal law about denominational organizations in Latvia promulgated.

1936 Roman Catholic Archbishop Springovics elevated to the rank of Metropolitan. Bishopric of Kurzeme reestablished.
—Greek-Orthodox Archbishop elevated to the rank of Metropolitan of autocephalous Greek-Orthodox Church in Latvia, and consecrated by the Patriarch of Constantinople.

1939 German Lutherans, led by their Bishop A. Poelchau, return to Germany. End of German minority in Latvia.

1940 Persecutions of Christian Churches in Latvia during Bolshevik occupation from June 17, 1940 till July 1, 1941.

1941-1944—German Nazis continue persecution in a more refined way.

1944 On October 13 Riga again occupied by Bolsheviks.

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